

The Sad Mac

What is the Sad Mac?

Usually when one turns on their Macintosh, it smiles at them (Happy Mac). But once in a long while it kind of snarls at you. First, let's explain what happens the moment you flick the switch, or hit the power key inside your Macintosh.

Once your Macintosh is brought up to full power the Mac runs what's called in the computer world a Power On Self Test (POST). Several memory and system diagnostic tests take place. If any one of these tests fails, the Sad Macintosh icon appears. The Macintosh SE will have two 8-digit hexadecimal numbers displayed under the icon, remarkable similar to the icon pictured above.

How do I make a Sad Mac happy again?

Most hardware failures that display a Sad Macintosh error will do so before the floppy drive or hard drive start spinning. If a Sad Macintosh appears after the disk starts spinning, the first digits of the error code are usually 'OF' and often indicate corrupted software. If you get this error code, try restarting the Macintosh with the Option and Command keys held down to rebuild the desktop file. You also may be able to fix these problems by reinstalling system software.

If all else fails it means there is a problem with the hardware and you should take your Mac to an Apple Qualified technician. Attempting repairs yourself will void Apple's warranty, of course, you don't have to tell them you tried to fix it yourself...

If you've never seen a Sad Mac before and you have this urge, try hitting the interrupt button (plastic things on the side of compact macs, little buttons on the front of newer Macs, or some weird keyboard combination on others) while the Mac is checking the RAM (this is when the screen is grey and void of all else at start up). Of course, this is not recommended by anybody because I'm sure there is some way it might affect something adversely.

What do those numbers mean anyways?

Macintosh SE and later systems:

Error codes 0001 through 000E indicate hardware failures.

```
xxxx0001 ROM test failed  
xxxxxxxx
```

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xxxx0002
```

RAM test failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx0003
RAM test failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx0004
RAM test failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx0005
RAM test failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx0006
VIA1 chip failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx0007
VIA2 chip failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx0008
ADB failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx0009
MMU failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx000A
NuBus failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx000B
SCSI chip failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx000C
IWM chip failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx000D
SCC chip failed
xxxxxxx

xxxx000E
Data bus test failed
xxxxxxx

Error code 000F is typically associated with software problems or hardware that has been modified

xxxx000F
Bus error
00000001

xxxx000F
Address error
00000002

xxxx000F
Illegal instruction error
00000003

xxxx000F
Divide-by-zero error
00000004

xxxx000F
Check instruction error
00000005

xxxx000F
coTrapCC, TrapCC, or TrapV error
00000006

xxxx000F
Privilege violation
00000007

xxxx000F
Trace
00000008

xxxx000F
Line A error
00000009

xxxx000F
Line F error
0000000A

xxxx000F
Unassigned error
0000000B

xxxx000F
Coprocessor protocol violation
0000000C

xxxx000F
Format exception
0000000D

xxxx000F
Spurious interrupt

0000000E

xxxx000F
Trap 0 to 15 exception
0000000F

xxxx000F
Interrupt level 1
00000010

xxxx000F
Interrupt level 2
00000011

xxxx000F
Interrupt level 3
00000012

xxxx000F
Interrupt level 4
00000013

xxxx000F
Interrupt level 5
00000014

xxxx000F
Interrupt level 6
00000015

xxxx000F
Interrupt level 7
00000016

xxxx000F
Coprocessor BRA or SET on unordered condition
00000017

xxxx000F
Coprocessor inexact result
00000018

xxxx000F
Coprocessor divide by 0
00000019

xxxx000F
Coprocessor underflow
0000001A

xxxx000F
Coprocessor operand error
0000001B

xxxx000F
Coprocesor operand error
0000001C

xxxx000F
Coprocesor NAN
0000001D

xxxx000F
MMU configuration
0000001E

xxxx000F
MMU illegal operation
0000001F

xxxx000F
MMU access level violation
00000020